

# NE CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION OF NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

**YOUTH PROGRAMS**

2019 | 2020 SCHOOL YEAR

**A SPECIAL BOND**

INSPIRES CHILDREN'S BOOK

DECEMBER 2019



Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives

# NE CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION OF NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Northeast Connection is published monthly to communicate with the members of Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative.

## OFFICERS & TRUSTEES

**Dandy A. Risman** - District 5, President  
**John L. Myers** - District 4, Vice-President  
**Benny L. Seabourn** - District 2, Secretary-Treasurer  
**Jimmy Caudill** - District 9, Assis. Secretary-Treasurer  
**Charles A. Wyrick** - District 1  
**Brian Kelly** - District 3  
**Sharron Gay** - District 6  
**James A. Wade** - District 7  
**Bill R. Kimbrell** - District 8

## MANAGEMENT TEAM

**Daniel Webster** - General Manager/CEO  
**Shane Burgess** - Engineering Design & Special Projects  
**Larry Cisneros** - Engineering  
**David Cusick** - NRS ROW  
**Ricky Hignite** - Information Technology  
**Lindey Leforce** - Member Services  
**Tim Mixson** - Safety & Loss Control  
**Connie Porter** - Financial Services  
**Nick Sutton** - Operations

## VINITA HEADQUARTERS

27039 South 4440 Road, Vinita, OK 74301

## GROVE OFFICE

212 South Main, Grove, OK 74344

## BUSINESS HOURS

Monday-Friday, 8am to 4:30pm

Offices are closed Saturday, Sunday and holidays.

## AVAILABLE 24 HOURS AT

1.800.256.6405

### If you experience an outage:

1. Check your switch or circuit breaker in the house and on the meter pole to be sure the trouble is not on your side of the service.
2. When contacting the cooperative to report an outage, use the name as it appears on your bill, and have both your pole number and account number ready.

*Please direct all editorial inquiries to Public Relations at 800.256.6405 or email [publicrelations@noec.coop](mailto:publicrelations@noec.coop)*

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer. If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found on-line at [www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office, or call 866.632.9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax 202.690.7442 or email at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).



## OVERHEAD POWER LINES

**Shane Burgess**

**Manager of Engineering Design & Special Projects**

The next time you hop in your car and run to the store, step up into the tractor to go set out hay for the cattle, or begin working on that new shop you've been

dreaming of building for a while, STOP!

Overhead power and communication lines are all around us. All too often, we don't notice just how prevalent they are. If you really pay attention, I'll bet you are within a couple hundred feet of an electrical pole almost your entire day, if not all day.

So, what's my point? It's easy to forget they exist. A dump truck driver unloading for a customer, a co-op deliveryman filling a grain bin for a customer, a farmer harvesting this year's crop, a carpenter putting a roof on a new building, or Uncle Eddie putting up Christmas lights for the holidays, all need to remember potential hazards are present. These individuals are all working hard (well almost.... hope the bulbs are still good) and we, as a Cooperative, want them to be safe doing so. All too often, we get wrapped up in the task at hand and open the door for accidents to happen.

The Cooperative has utilized a variety of pole heights over the years ranging from 25' to upwards of 65' and 70' depending on the situation. Construction standards are in place to ensure the electric distribution system is designed and built to applicable codes and/or to exceed the minimum requirements. However, oversize equipment or handling of long construction material or tools can still result in potentially hazardous situations. Our goal is to educate the membership, assist if there are questions, and mitigate every safety hazard before it becomes something more. Just as we strive to ensure our employees go home safely at the end of the day, we strive to ensure you go home at the end of the day too.

So, as you enjoy the fruits of your labor this harvest season, head to the airport to pick up your loved ones for the holidays or just watch ole Uncle Eddie struggling to make Rudolph's nose turn red on the roof, be mindful of the things around you and safe in your endeavors.

Should a question ever arise about the safety of overhead power and communication lines, please don't hesitate to give us a call. We stand ready to serve our membership any way we can.



08

**MAYES COUNTY RECIPES**



04

**A SPECIAL BOND**

**SPECIAL NOTE**

**NOEC CLOSED FOR HOLIDAYS**

Dec 24-25 and Jan 1

Our offices will be closed to allow employees time with their families.



07

**YOUTH PROGRAMS**

**\$100 IS HIDING!**

Search the pages of NE Connection for a 6-digit account number with an asterisk on each side. For example: \*XXXXXX\*. Compare it to your account number, which appears on your monthly electric bill. If they match, contact the cooperative at 918.256.9332, by January 2, 2020 to claim a \$100 credit on your electric account.

Events are published as space allows and must be submitted at least 60 days in advance. Send information, including phone number for publication, to Northeast Connection Events Calendar, PO Box 948, Vinita 74301 or to sarah.wilhelm@noec.coop.

**DECEMBER EVENT CALENDAR**

- **PARK OF LIGHTS 2019**  
Nov 28 - Dec 30 | Fairland  
Twin Bridges State Park  
918.782.4474
- **WINTER WONDERLAND CHRISTMAS LIGHT TOUR**  
Nov 28 - Jan 1 | Ketchum  
Pine Lodge Resort  
918.782.1400
- **ROTARY ANNUAL PANCAKE BREAKFAST & FOOD DRIVE**  
Dec 7 | Miami  
City of Miami Building  
918.542.1590
- **CHRISTMAS IN THE PARK**  
Dec 8 | Chouteau  
Guy Williams Park  
918.476.8222
- **MOVIE: ELF**  
Dec 13 | Miami  
Coleman Theatre  
918.540.2425
- **A COLEMAN BIG BAND CHRISTMAS**  
Dec 14 | Miami  
Coleman Theatre  
918.540.2425
- **CHRISTMAS LIGHT BOAT PARADE**  
Dec 14 | Grove  
Cherokee Yacht Club  
918.782.4421
- **MOVIE: IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE**  
Dec 15 | Miami  
Coleman Theatre  
918.540.2425
- **CHRISTMAS PARADES**  
Pryor Dec 5 at 7pm  
Vinita Dec 5 at 7pm  
Ketchum Dec 6 at 5:30pm  
Bluejacket Dec 7 at 10am  
Quapaw Dec 7 at 12pm  
Welch Dec 7 at 2pm  
Commerce Dec 7 at 3pm  
Chelsea Dec 7 at 5pm  
Miami Dec 7 at 6pm  
Locust Grove Dec 10 at 7pm  
Jay Dec 14 at 2pm  
Grove Dec 14 at 5:30pm  
Disney Dec 14 at 6pm  
Colcord Dec 21 at 5pm

# TIPS & TRICKS

## HOLIDAY SAFETY

- **Protect Cords:** To avoid shock or fire hazards, cords should never be pinched by furniture, forced into small spaces such as doors or windows, placed under rugs, located near heat sources, or attached by nails or staples.
- **Live Tree:** Keep tree fresh by watering daily. Dry trees are a serious fire hazard.
- **Candles:** Use battery operated candles. Candles start almost half of home decoration fires.
- **Electrical Outlets:** Do not overload electrical outlets. Overloaded electrical outlets and faulty wires are a common cause of holiday fires. Avoid overloading outlets and plug only one high-wattage appliance into each outlet at a time.
- **String Lights:** Never connect more than three strings of incandescent lights. More than three strands may not only blow a fuse, but can also cause a fire.
- **Cooking:** Stay in the kitchen when something is cooking. Unattended cooking equipment is the leading cause of home cooking fires.



### REMEMBER TO:

- Watch that children don't put electrical decorations or cords in their mouths.
- Keep an eye on pets that may chew or damage electrical cords.
- Turn off holiday lights and decorations when you leave the house or go to bed.

# TIPS & TRICKS

## HOLIDAY ENERGY EFFICIENCY

### DECORATIONS:

- **Use LED Lights:** Switching to LED (aka light emitting diode) lights is an energy savings no-brainer. Why? They use 90 percent less electricity than regular Christmas lights.
- **Fiber Optic Decorations:** Want to take holiday energy savings a step beyond LED? Consider fiber optic decorations. Fiber optic technology uses one lamp source to light multiple light points, making it the super economical and energy efficient choice. This means that fiber optic trees use only one bulb that then sends light through the fiber optic cable.
- **Limit Lit Time:** Sure, we all love the ambiance lights provide our holiday celebrations. But no one needs them on all day or when people aren't in the room to enjoy them. Hoffstetler recommends using a timer to help you keep lighting to a sensible dose and save energy during the holidays.

### COOKING:

- **Don't Peak:** As tempting as it is to check on what's cooking in the oven, the smarter move is to use the oven light. Every time you open the oven door, the temperature drops by as much as 25 percent, according to Energy.gov. Getting back up to the appropriate temperature obviously takes more energy. The stovetop version of this advice? Put a lid on it – and try to keep it on as much as possible when you're cooking.
- **Time It:** While there is a science to cooking in your oven, experts at Energy.gov say not every recipe requires that your oven remain on as long as the recipe states. Nor is pre-heating necessary. Recipes that require baking for longer than an hour, for instance, don't really need a pre-heated oven. If you're cooking on an electric stovetop or oven, you can also turn them off 10-15 minutes before the dish should be done and let the residual heat take care of the rest of the cooking.

### HEATING:

- **Turn It Down:** Doing a lot of cooking? Having a lot of guests over for a party? This activity will raise the temperature in your home. Give your furnace a break during these times – lowering your thermostat by just one degree can decrease energy usage by 3 percent.
- **Here Comes the Sun:** Working with the sun to make maximum use of its warmth is a year-round proposition that can take on additional importance during the colder months in general and as a way to save energy during the holidays in particular. Keep curtains and drapes open during the day to allow the sun's light to naturally warm your home. As the sun begins to set, close them to keep warmth in and cold drafts out.



# GRANDMOTHER'S SPECIAL BOND

## WITH GRANDDAUGHTER INSPIRES CHILDREN'S BOOK

**Vinita resident Sherry Green, has always shared a special bond with granddaughter, Hayden Giles. The two spent many formative hours together when Hayden was very young. From that bond, a book was born that chronicles one of the important experiences the two have shared.**

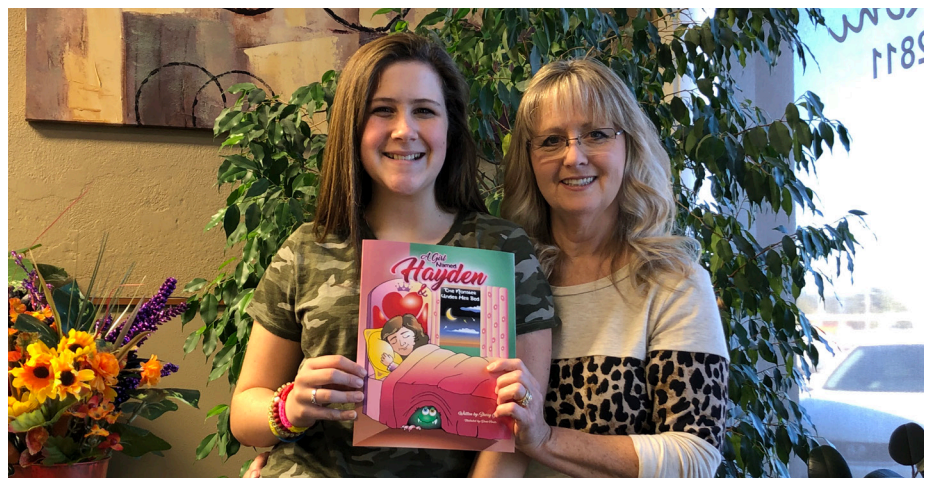
There is no denying the special bond that exists between grandparents and grandchildren. Not only do grandparents get to extend the love they have for their children to their grandchildren, most will tell you with a wry smile that they also get to experience many of the joys of raising children all over again without taking on the responsibility for everyday care.

You may have even heard a grandparent say something like: "I get to spoil them and then send them home to their parents." If you are a grandparent, you may have said something along those same lines yourself.

Vinita resident Sherry Green has always shared a special bond with granddaughter, Hayden Giles. The two spent many formative hours together when Hayden was very young. From that bond, a book was born that chronicles one of the important experiences the two have shared.

A Girl Named Hayden & The Monster Under Her Bed tells the story of Hayden's vivid imagination and how her grandmother helped her overcome one of her biggest fears. Written by Sherry and illustrated by Denis Proulx, the book was released October 3 and is available for purchase on Amazon for \$7.98. A digital version of the book can be purchased for \$3.99.

"My hope for the book in the beginning was to encourage Hayden to develop a love for reading and to make her feel special," said Sherry. "But, this project took on a life of its own and transformed itself into a small legacy for her to have forever and to read to her children and grandchildren after I am long gone from this world. I wanted her to know she is a blessing to our family. She was important. She was loved."



We won't spoil anything for potential readers, but suffice it to say it's a cute story with a feel-good ending that kids will love.

Hayden is eleven years-old now and she and Sherry still spend lots of quality time together.

**"Hayden and I have always had a special bond," Sherry said. "We've spent a lot of time together and much of that time was spent in a learning capacity—especially when she was a toddler. Whether it was counting train cars (Vinita has its fair share of trains), steps up the ladder to the slide, or learning colors, we always tried to make it fun and competitive. My goal, other than just entertaining her, was to put a little effort into helping her learn new skills. I wanted it to be so easy and fun that learning was never work and that challenges were welcomed with enthusiasm."**

Sherry recalls using Leap Frog's magnetic alphabet game to make learning letter sounds fun for Hayden.

"I'm sure the music and the constant every letter makes a sound voice drove her parents crazy," Sherry laughed. "I had to buy three different ones over time because they would disappear. Eventually we gave up and just moved on to a dry erase board."

When it was time to begin learning colors, Hayden again proved to be a quick study.

"She knew I was eager to have her tell me the color of something. Sometimes she would hold out just to watch me squirm," Sherry chuckled.

On one particular occasion, Sherry remembers her son Eric calling her with some good news after picking Hayden up from daycare one day.



"He called me so excited because she told him the school bus was yellow. We had driven by that school bus a hundred times and I would always say, 'That's a school bus! Guess what color it is?'"

It was about that time that Sherry says the "happy dance" was invented.

"Anyone who's worked alongside me at the barber shop knows Hayden and the happy dance," she said. "We had one for all occasions."

Every time Hayden would succeed at a task, Sherry would overreact with excitement and do a happy dance. One time it happened at the railroad crossing on Canadian Street in Vinita.

**"She had just written a three-letter word on her dry erase board and told me what the word was. I jumped out of my car and did the happy dance right there."**

Sherry said her sidewalk and back patio were eventually covered with Hayden's handiwork scribbled in chalk.

"She would play and I would write. Occasionally I would ask her 'Hayden, what's this word?' She would answer. One time I copied a word without knowing it. She said 'You already wrote that one, Me-Me.' I thought to myself, okay, so she also has a photographic memory. I may have been a little prejudice."

The next level of learning for Hayden required Sherry to step up her game a bit. It was time to embrace technology.

"We advanced to the iPad for learning games like memory games and math," Sherry said. "She didn't even know there were regular games until we went on vacation with her cousin, whose iPad was full of cool, race car games."

Sherry worked hard to prepare Hayden for school and have her ready to read. But she wasn't prepared for Hayden to be overwhelmed with pages full of words. That's when they started making up stories and creating their own books. They'd use a hole punch and string to bind the pages together.

"Our stories were much more fun, as they were always about a girl named Hayden," Sherry said.

There once was a girl named Hayden, who was the apple of her daddy's eye! She loved to eat at Clanton's and her favorite was chocolate pie!

Soon enough, Sherry found herself uploading content to Shutterfly and using pictures and graphics to help illustrate the stories.

"Of course, they looked like actual books," Sherry said. "Hayden loved them and would take them to school to share with her class during Dr. Suess week."

When Sherry began writing about Hayden's fear of a monster lurking under her bed, she realized that illustrating the book was going to be more challenging. After letting her husband Keith read it, he encouraged her to do something more than what she had been doing.

"He told me he thought it needed to be a real book," Sherry said. "That was five years ago. It sat in transcript form a long time while we tried to figure out how to get it illustrated."

Sherry added: "Over the years, Hayden and I changed the storyline a little and critiqued the ending, but the body of the story remained true. She was scared of this monster and telling her monsters weren't real just wasn't working."

The solution to the monster problem came from Jerri Forrest, owner of the daycare Hayden attended.

**"One day when I picked Hayden up, Jerri told me she felt like the monster needed to be real and I had to destroy it for her. I was going to have to lie to her, something I was against. I thought about it for a few days. We had tried everything, and I mean everything, to give her the power to overcome this. Finally, I decided to face the monster myself. Now, the method I used to destroy the monster is not in the book. I had to tone it down for a children's book. But, the monster wasn't coming back and you could see the stress leave Hayden's body when she realized it was gone and she was free to sleep in her room and enjoy it."**

Even though the book has been available for purchase only a short time, Sherry said the Vinita community has been supportive.

"Hayden and I were at Braum's the other day and this lady was smiling at us as she was giving us our order," Sherry said. "She told me she liked my book. I thanked her and introduced her to Hayden. Hayden asked me later if I knew the lady and I told her I didn't. She said 'You know what this means, don't you, MeMe?' My reply was: 'No, what?' She said: 'It means I'm famous and you're an author.'"

"MeMe has always been there for me," Hayden said. "She taught me how to read, write, talk, and make sentences. I never really liked to read, but she would make little books about me that encouraged me to read. She is such a great grandma. I don't know what I would do without her."

Hayden is appreciative of the role her grandmother has played in her life. Sherry added: "Hayden is going to grow up on me and I will become an old woman. But I will have so many memories of our time together. Who knows? Maybe someday I will write more about our adventures."

Sherry Green owns and operates Sherry's Barber & Style in Vinita. She has been a hairstylist for 28 years. She is married to former Craig County Game Warden Keith Green. The Greens are members of Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative.





# REC REWARDING OUTSTANDING STUDENTS

**Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative is inviting area students to participate in its 2019-2020 school year youth programs and in return receive some much-deserved recognition. \*942161\***

The cooperative is sponsoring two essay contests, as well as a college scholarship opportunity. Information can be found online at [www.noec.coop](http://www.noec.coop) under the Community Services tab. Interested individuals can request information by emailing [clint.branham@noec.coop](mailto:clint.branham@noec.coop) or by phone at 1.800.256.6405, ext. 9340.



## YOUTH TOUR

REC will be sending four high school juniors from its service area on a week-long, all-expense-paid tour of our nation's capital in 2020 as part of its annual Youth Tour essay contest. If you are in the eleventh grade and attend school within the cooperative service area of Mayes, Delaware, Craig and Ottawa Counties (or Chelsea High School in Rogers County) you are eligible to enter this contest. Youth Tour hopefuls can submit a written essay of 500 words or more on the topic: "Of The Seven Cooperative Principles, My Favorite Is...". Submissions must be received on or before March 6, 2020. Youth Tour winners will visit Washington, D. C., June 19-25, 2020.

## ENERGY CAMP

Four eighth-graders from the cooperative service area will enjoy a week-long adventure at Canyon Camp near beautiful Red Rock Canyon in Hinton, Oklahoma, during the 2020 Energy Camp. A winning essay will earn these eighth-graders an opportunity to take part in a fun and educational trip that comes around only once. A written essay of 500 words or fewer on the topic: "What I Can Do To Save Energy" may be submitted between now and April 3, 2020. Energy Camp runs May 26-29, 2020.

## COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP

High school seniors whose parents or guardians are Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative members and who live in a household served by REC electric are encouraged to apply for a \$1,000 college scholarship. Application deadline is March 20, 2020. Four winners will be selected. Scholarship applications are available upon request.

## CLASSROOM INCENTIVE

REC is encouraging area teachers to get involved and incorporate the essay contests into classroom curriculum. If an instructor whose administration of an essay as part of classroom curriculum produces a contest finalist, he or she could be rewarded with as much as \$200 toward the purchase of classroom materials or equipment.



# RECIPES: MAYES COUNTY



**SUBMITTED BY: SUE DIXON**

## **HAYSTACK SUPPER**

- **1 ¾ Cups Crushed Saltines**
- **2 Cups Cooked Rice**
- **3 Pounds Ground Beef**
- **1 Large Onion, Chopped**
- **1 ½ Cups Tomato Juice**
- **¾ Cup Water**
- **3 Tbsp Taco Seasoning**
- **Salt and Pepper to Taste**
- **½ Cup Butter, Cubed**
- **½ Cup Flour**
- **4 Cups Milk**
- **1 Pound Processed Cheese (Like Velveeta), Cubed**
- **4 Cups Shredded Lettuce**
- **3 Cups Shredded Cheddar**
- **3 Medium Tomatoes, Diced**
- **1 10-oz Jar Pimiento-Stuffed Olives (Optional)**
- **Tortilla Chips**
- **Salsa**

Divide crackers between two, 9 x 13 ungreased pans. Top evenly with rice.

In a large skillet, cook beef and onion until meat is no longer pink. Drain fat, then add tomato juice, water and seasonings. Simmer for 15-20 minutes. Spoon over rice.

In a large saucepan, melt butter. Stir in flour until smooth. Gradually add milk and bring to a boil. Cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Reduce heat and stir in processed cheese until melted.

Pour over beef mixture. Then top with lettuce, shredded cheddar, diced tomato, and olives (if using). Serve immediately with chips and salsa.

*Sue's note: This makes two casseroles (6 servings each) so just half it if that is too much. This is a very good dish for potlucks or family get-togethers.*



**SUBMITTED BY: DIANA RICE**

**BROCCOLI & RICE CASSEROLE**

- **20 oz Frozen Broccoli, Chopped and Drained**
- **1 Cup Cheez Whiz**
- **2 Cans Cream of Chicken Soup**
- **¼ Cup Water**
- **½ Cup Butter, Melted**
- **2 Cups Minute Rice**
- **½ Cup Milk**
- **Salt and Pepper to Taste**

In a large mixing bowl, combine all ingredients. Pour into a greased, 9 x 13 baking dish and cover tightly with foil. Bake at 350° F for one hour or until broccoli is tender.

*Diana's note: This recipe was given to me more than 30 years ago by good friend Penny Simpson.*

**SUBMITTED BY: PAM COLLINS**

**FRESH APPLE CAKE**

- **2 Cups Sugar**
- **1 Cup Butter or Margarine**
- **2 ½ Cups Flour**
- **3 Eggs**
- **1 tsp Vanilla**
- **1 tsp Baking Soda**
- **2 tsp Baking Powder**
- **1 tsp Cinnamon**
- **3 Cups Diced Apple**
- **1 Cup Chopped Pecans or Walnuts**
- **6 oz Butterscotch Chips**

In large mixing bowl, cream together sugar and butter. Beat in eggs and vanilla. In a separate bowl, combine flour, baking soda, baking powder, and cinnamon. Add to creamed mixture and thoroughly combine. Stir in the apples and nuts. Butterscotch chips can be stirred into batter or sprinkled on top before baking. Bake in a greased 9 x 13 pan at 350° F for 40 minutes.

*Pam's note: I combined recipes from two special ladies for this cake. One from my husband's grandmother and another from a precious older lady from our church family. Making this cake always makes me think of them.*



# CO-OP CONNECTIONS CARD

## DELIVERS DISCOUNTS TO MEMBERS

Use the Co-op Connections card you already have, download the app, or print out your own card at [www.connections.coop](http://www.connections.coop).

For more than 10 years, NOEC members have enjoyed discounts on local, regional and national offers with the Cooperative Connections Card.

You can still present your card to merchants and businesses to obtain valuable savings.

Use the card you already have or print one at the [connections.coop](http://connections.coop) website. You can even download the app and use the card from your phone. While you are at the website, check out all the money-saving offers from a list of local, regional, and national merchants and businesses.

.....

## DECEMBER 2019 DEALS

### AMISH CRAFTED FURNITURE

12193 Hwy 69 S, Chouteau, OK | 918.476.4600

**Offer** Free delivery within 25 mile radius.

### THE BOOK EXCHANGE & THE BIBLE BOOKSTORE

3 N Adair St, Pryor, OK | 918.825.6051

**Offer** 10% off books, in stock only.

### FIRST CLASS MERCHANTS MALL

104 S Chouteau Ave, Chouteau, OK | 918.476.4015

**Offer** 10% off all merchandise.

### MADelyn'S FLOWERS & GIFTS

120 E Main, Locust Grove, OK | 918.479.5262

**Offer** 10% Discount on in-store purchases up to \$200. Excluding taxes and delivery fees.

### NANCY'S HERBS

215 N Chouteau Ave, Chouteau, OK | 918.476.4151

**Offer** 10% off retail for Nature's Sunshine products.

### NEOSHO EMPORIUM

12289 S Hwy 69, Chouteau, OK

**Offer** 20% off all merchandise.

### OUR VINTAGE TREASURES

220 N Chouteau Ave, Chouteau, OK | 918.476.3114

**Offer** 10% off all family-owned treasures.